

# UAAACT News

Utah Augmentative, Alternative, Assistive Communication  
And Technology Teams

UAAACT Web Site: <http://www.uaaact.org>

September 2008

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## The Beginning of Another School Year!

It is the beginning of another school year for the UAAACT Teams. We hope that you had a wonderful summer and found time to relax and enjoy a trip or two. Maybe you just stayed home and enjoyed your yard and your family. It is now time to make plans for upcoming events and training opportunities. The beginning of the school year is always somewhat hectic so in the pages of this newsletter we will be listing some calendar dates, helpful hints and a few websites with useable information and helps. Please keep records on UAAACT hours and the students you serve so when reports are due in June of 2009, you will have the information to send to Janalyn Biesinger.

The most exciting event of the year will be the 2009 UAAACT Conference. Conference information is on page 3 of this newsletter.

We have a new UAAACT Leadership Council for the 2008-09 school year. Second year council members are Bob Wasden (Kane/Garfield) as Chair, and Dave John (Uintah). We welcome new council members Janalyn Biesinger (Granite), Monique Carlsen (Logan) and Bret MacCabe (Provo). Please consult the UAAACT website to see which of these council members is your area contact. If you have questions, need help or have information for the UAAACT Leadership Council, please e-mail that person.

Please watch the dates for events and deadlines. It is important to meet deadlines sent out from Craig and Lynn. There is a lot of paper work that must be done for equipment orders, as an example, and it is important that we adhere to these dates.

### Mark your Calendars

September 12      Team Leader Training at UCAT (1:00 – 3:00)

All team leaders are invited and for those that attend you will receive a “Classmate Reader” for your team inventory.

September 18      UCAT Open House (3:00 – 7:00)

This open house is designed to help people in their everyday lives. Learn about modified vans, obtaining wheelchairs and scooters, augmentative communication devices, ask vendors questions, talk to a funding specialist or a representative from the Disability Law Center. For more information call 801-887-9380 or 888-866-5550. Invite parents of students you work with. Spread the Word!

### Calendar Dates - continued:

September 26    New UAAACT Member Orientation  
(12:30 – 3:30)

**New UAAACT members on your team are invited for this informational meeting.**

**\*\* All events are held at the Judy Ann Buffmire Rehabilitation Service Center (Computer Center) 1595 West 500 South in Salt Lake.**

## Begin Making Plans

### 2009 UAAACT Conference

February 12 and 13, 2009  
Marriott Hotel  
Provo, Utah

**Attend the 2009 UAAACT Conference to learn how computers, software, augmentative communication devices and other assistive technology tools can make a significant difference for students with disabilities. For more conference information and a conference registration form, visit the UAAACT Project website. Conference information is posted at: [www.uaaact.org](http://www.uaaact.org)**

### Request for Success Stories

**Jocelyn Taylor, Specialist at the Utah State Office of Education (USOE), has requested UAAACT success stories. Please describe how your UAAACT team has helped a student be more successful in their educational program through using assistive technology. In one or two paragraphs, tell how low tech, high tech, curriculum adaptations, or other AT applications have been beneficial to a student. Send your stories to Craig or directly to Jocelyn at the USOE.**

**Jocelyn is our best advocate. With your success stories, she will be able to share the value of the UAAACT project with parents, teachers and her associates at the USOE.**



### Did You Know?

**1. When assessing or working with visually impaired students let the student move materials to where they have the best viewing of the materials or item. They generally will show you their field of vision. (Maureen Ross, Vision)**  
**2. When working with teachers, help them to understand that in the classroom you don't ask: "Can you see this"? The visually impaired student doesn't know how it should look. Always ask them a specific question, (i.e.) "What is this letter, what is this shape, etc." (Maureen Ross, Vision ) Davis District.**

**3. Did you know that Craig and Scott will come to your district to consult with your teams and will demonstrate new programming? Call them.**

**If you have some ideas to share, send them to: [jwest@dsdmail.net](mailto:jwest@dsdmail.net) or [sbanderson@dsdmail.net](mailto:sbanderson@dsdmail.net) List your name and team. We will list them in the up-coming newsletters.**

### Interesting Websites

**This summer Craig received a notice of a very interesting Website you might want to check out. "Annie's Resource Attic" <http://annbrundigestudio.com>**

**This site is designed and developed by Ann Brundige, who was formerly connected with Learning Magic and was also the editor for HyperStudio Journal. She is now publishing free resources for teachers in a non-commercial format. She is making available free materials and she is hoping that it will become a place where we can pool our ideas, tricks, and techniques. Check it out!**

**Database helps educators compare assistive software and technologies**

**Link: <http://www.techmatrix.org>**

**The National Center for Technology Innovation (NCTI) has updated its TechMatrix, a searchable database that enables educators and families of students with disabilities to identify and compare assistive learning software and technologies. Users can search for and compare more than 190 products that focus on improving the lives of students with special needs. Customized searches in four areas: reading, math, writing and assistive technology.**

# 2009 UAAACT Conference

## "Implementing Assistive Technology in the Classroom"

The 2009 UAAACT Conference will be held at the Provo Marriott Hotel and Conference Center on February 11-13, 2009. This is the first time we have held the UAAACT Conference in Provo and this is the first UAAACT Conference to feature a pre-conference day.

The pre-conference day (Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>) will be just for UAAACT team members. Presenters will be **Keri Huddleston** and **Teru Langsdale**, who presented at "Closing the Gap" last fall. They will present a full-day workshop entitled: "What if the Teachers Won't Do It?" The UAAACT dinner will be held on Wednesday night.

The keynote speaker on Thursday will be **Libby Rush**. Libby is an AAC and AT consultant with a wealth of knowledge and practical experience that she will share with us. She will combine her understanding of literacy skills with low tech tools that can be used in almost any environment. On Friday, the keynote speaker will be **Susan Johnston**, from the University of Utah. Many of the UAAACT members have attended Susan's summer workshops on AAC or her sessions at previous UAAACT Conferences. By popular demand, we have invited Susan back to our conference to share her abundant knowledge.

We are working hard to attract more vendors to our conference. At this time, we have commitments from three new vendors: Attainment, Blink Twice, and Enable Mart.

Make your plans now! Clear your schedules so that you can attend our 2009 UAAACT Conference. Conference registration forms are on the UAAACT Website.

If you are interested in presenting one of the breakout sessions, complete a proposal form, also found on the UAAACT web site. Suggested session topics are listed on the next page. UAAACT members selected to present at the conference will earn a \$500 team equipment stipend.

Remember to make plans      February 11-13, 2009



Suggested Presentation Topics  
for the UAAACT Conference

- Evaluation process for students with AT needs.
- Data gathering and Baseline information.
- Formalized Evaluation Process (WATI, SETT)
- Soft Data Collection for student with AT needs.
- Parental Involvement.
- Helping the Special Education Staff with Implementation.
- Providing Training, Coaching and/or Modeling for Staff.
- Helping parents to implement materials and equipment in the home.
- Documentation of Service – Best Practices.
- What does adequate yearly progress look like?
- Ways to train Teachers and Staff.
- Creating Communication Opportunities.
- Follow-up procedures after recommendation have been made.
- How Can I Provide Support to Teachers and Parents?
- Adapting materials to fit Curriculum Standards.
- Writing of IEP Goals to fit the Needs of the AT Student.

Remember that the theme for the Conference will be:  
“Implementing Assistive Technology in the Classroom”

Apply now for doing a presentation.  
Proposal Forms at: <http://www.uaaact.org>  
Send completed proposals to Craig.

Verizon Foundation Education Grants

*Up to \$10,000 to boost literacy skills*

The Verizon Foundation is in the business of improving lives in literacy, knowledge and a readiness for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This foundation seeks to help people to: \*Increase their literacy and educational achievement. \*Avoid being an abuser or a victim of domestic violence. \*Achieve and sustain health and safety.

Eligible organizations seeking grants must be prepared to track and report program outcomes as well as specific results that demonstrate measurable human impact. In the grant application, organizations must indicate what outcomes are targeted through programming and what results, as specified on the grant application, the organization will measure. Grants are reviewed on a continuous calendar year basis from Jan. 1 through Nov. 1

Verizon Foundation only accepts electronic proposals through its Apply Online process. Successfully submitted online proposals receive an electronic notice confirming receipt of the application via e-mail. Please allow up to ninety (90) days for a final decision.

Link:

<http://foundation.verizon.com/grant/guidelines.shtml>

If you know of other grant opportunities, let us know so that it can be shared with others.

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**What unique things is your team doing? What kind of success have you had?**

**We would like to know about it so it can be shared.**

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## Augmentative Success Stories

I support a self-contained classroom for children with autism at the elementary level. We have had several children who have needed concrete representations for exchange because pictures do not have meaning for these students. I used snack items from the classroom, such as a cracker, a cookie, several skittles, etc., and mounted them on a mat board and then mummified them with hot glue as a protective coating. One student has now graduated to exchanging picture symbols on a sentence strip. The concrete representations opened the door to symbolic connections for communication.

This same student learned to discriminate between picture symbols by requesting actions that she likes by using a Big Mack. A picture representing “tickle” was attached to the top of a Big Mack, and two other pictures were attached to two other Big Macks. The request was rewarded by the teacher softly stroking up and down the students’ arms, using light touch as a tickle. The teacher would then scramble the Big Macks and the student would look for the particular symbol that would give her the response that she liked.

One self-contained classrooms that I have consulted with as an augmentative team member has incorporated a 32 message communicator and a Cheap Talk into the regular routine. The children have learned to call roll, respond to the roll, and do the Pledge of Allegiance in the classroom during calendar time. Children also use the 32 message communicator to identify photos of class members taken in the classroom. This allows them to make the comments about the photos while increasing their use of verbs. One of the children in the class uses a DynaVox DV4. These same symbols have been programmed into her device so she can also participate in the classroom activities. Her favorite game is Simon Says. In this game she can review body parts and verbs. The classroom teacher had an end of the year program where all of her students were able to show what they had learned and demonstrated their use of their augmentative devices in the classroom.

Janalyn Biesinger – Granite District

## Josh and Augmentative Technology

Josh came to Centerville Elementary when he was in the second grade. It was immediately apparent that Josh was intelligent and witty. The question then became, “How could this bright student, who did not have any functional use of his arms or legs, become a part of the mainstream curriculum program with help from the Resource Room?”

Assistance from the Augmentative Team was immediately sought and Josh’s educational world at once opened wide! He was taught how to type using a head pointer and Intellikeys. Later Co Writer 4000 was added to assist Josh with his spelling when writing. A Natural Point System was installed on his computer so that he could “mouse” on his own using a small computer. This allowed Josh to access many school programs presented through the computer and Internet. Since he used a Joy Stick type device he could manipulate his power chair through the halls at school. Josh has learned to use a Joy Stick mounted on his desk to access some computer programs that utilize a scanning program. Because of Augmentative Technology, Josh is today a “regular” 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, who moved on with his peers to 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Now the question has changed from “What can Josh do?” to “What can’t Josh do?”

Lisa Wright, Resource Teacher – Davis Team R

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